



Office of Childhood  
Office of Special Education  
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## **Annual Report on Children Referred to First Steps for the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA): Calendar Year 2021**

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## **Purpose**

Under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act or CAPTA (Public Law 111-320), a referral of a child under the age of three who is involved in a substantiated case of abuse or neglect must be made to the early intervention program funded by Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In Missouri, the Part C of IDEA is known as First Steps.

The Missouri First Steps program contracts with a System Point of Entry (SPOE) in ten regions throughout the state. Each SPOE is responsible for the local administration of the program, including referral, intake, eligibility determination, and Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) development.

The Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS), Children's Division requires staff to refer any child under age three who meets the criteria of CAPTA to First Steps. This report provides information related to the children referred to First Steps with a referral source of CAPTA or DSS in calendar year 2021.

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## **Children Referred to the First Steps Program**

In calendar year 2021, 1,109 children were referred to the First Steps program by the Department of Social Services Children's Division. Of the 1,109 children, 599 children (54.0%) had a referral source of CAPTA, and 510 children had a referral source of DSS.

Of the 599 children referred with a referral source of CAPTA, 138 children (23.0%) were found eligible and reached the status of an IFSP. The remaining 461 children did not reach IFSP status due to the following reasons: 253 were withdrawn by a parent or guardian; 106 were Part C ineligible; 86 were unable to contact/locate; 10 were refused by SPOE; five were inquiry only\*; and one moved out of state.

Of the 510 children referred with a referral source of DSS, 168 children (32.9%) were found eligible and reached the status of an IFSP. The remaining 342 children did not reach IFSP status due to the following reasons: 138 were withdrawn by a parent or guardian; 116 were Part C ineligible; 81 were unable to contact/locate; four moved out of state; two were inquiry only\*; and one was refused by SPOE.

\*Referral records that were closed with the reason *inquiry only* were included in this report. Inquiry only refers to those who are only seeking more information about the child or program.

## **Active Children by SPOE Region**

Table 1 represents the 599 children referred to First Steps with a referral source of CAPTA and their eligibility percentages by SPOE region.

**Table 1. CAPTA Referrals and First Steps Status for Calendar Year 2021**

SPOE Region	Referred to First Steps	Reached IFSP	% Served
Region 1 - Greater St. Louis	23	9	39.1%
Region 2 - St. Louis County	20	8	40.0%
Region 3 - Northeast	35	10	28.6%
Region 4 - Northwest	17	3	17.6%
Region 5 - Greater Kansas City	50	16	32.0%
Region 6 - Central	113	15	13.3%
Region 7 - Southwest	39	15	38.5%
Region 8 - South Central	139	22	15.8%
Region 9 - East Central	57	14	24.6%
Region 10 - Southeast	106	26	24.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>23.0%</b>

Table 2 represents the 510 children referred to First Steps with a referral source of DSS and their eligibility percentages by SPOE region.

**Table 2. DSS Referrals and First Steps Status for Calendar Year 2021**

SPOE Region	Referred to First Steps	Reached IFSP	% Served
Region 1 - Greater St. Louis	56	27	48.2%
Region 2 - St. Louis County	55	23	41.8%
Region 3 - Northeast	35	10	28.6%
Region 4 - Northwest	31	12	38.7%
Region 5 - Greater Kansas City	60	16	26.7%
Region 6 - Central	42	5	11.9%
Region 7 - Southwest	29	15	51.7%
Region 8 - South Central	93	24	25.8%
Region 9 - East Central	47	19	40.4%
Region 10 - Southeast	62	17	27.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>32.9%</b>

For a map of the SPOE regions, visit the First Steps website at:

<https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/first-steps-spoe-contact-information-region>

#### **Authorizations**

Table 3 represents the First Steps service authorizations for the 138 children referred to First Steps with a referral source of CAPTA who received First Steps services. As of February 2022, there were a total of 451 active authorizations for the 138 children who had authorized services.

**Table 3. First Steps Service Authorizations for Children Referred by CAPTA**

Service Type	Authorization Count	Percentage
EI Testing	125	27.7%
Special Instruction	108	23.9%
Occupational Therapy	73	16.2%
Physical Therapy	72	16.0%
Speech Language Pathology	40	8.9%
Assistive Technology	11	2.4%
Dietary/Nutrition Services	10	2.2%
Applied Behavior Analysis	5	1.1%
Counseling	5	1.1%
Audiology	2	0.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 4 represents the First Steps service authorizations for the 168 children referred to First Steps with a referral source of DSS who received First Steps services. As of February 2022, there were a total of 648 active authorizations for the 168 children.

**Table 4. First Steps Service Authorizations for Children Referred by DSS**

Service Type	Authorization Count	Percentage
Special Instruction	143	22.1%
EI Testing	134	20.7%
Occupational Therapy	115	17.7%
Speech Language Pathology	87	13.4%
Physical Therapy	76	11.7%
Applied Behavior Analysis	23	3.5%
Dietary/Nutrition Services	22	3.4%
Assistive Technology	19	2.9%
Social Work	9	1.4%
Vision Services	7	1.1%
Translation Services	6	0.9%
Audiology	6	0.9%
Counseling	1	0.2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Average Age

Table 5 represents the average age, in months, of the 599 children referred to First Steps by CAPTA and the 510 children referred to First Steps by DSS. The average age of children referred to First Steps in 2021 was 10.5 months for CAPTA referrals and 14.3 months for DSS referrals.

**Table 5. Average Age of Infants Referred**

